William Robertson was also there as Chief of the Imperial General Staff. Transport occupied much of our time. The discussion reveals the kind of problem that was responsible for delay. The difficulty ought never to have been allowed to delay matters when time was so vital to success. The British Army demanded 250 trains—an addition of 120 trains over what had been already allocated to them. The French Railways could not spare more than 200 in all, and these with difficulty and only for a short period—for 15 days from 1st April, by the process of stopping supplies for the civilian population during that fortnight. As French Ministers pointed out, *French protest* the British Army insisted upon twice as *at our demand for trains* many locomotives and waggons as the French Army, and that for half the numbers of troops put into action. General Ragenau stated at Calais that he felt considerable surprise at the size and number of the trains required when compared with the demand of the French Armies, which were being prepared for similar operations. The French, whose striking force consisted of 70 divisions, only required 2,800 waggons a day for two groups of armies. But the requirements of the British striking force of little more than half the size was 8,000 waggons a day. He could not understand how it was that the British Army required so many more waggons, when the French effectives were so much greater.

General Nivelle agreed with General

Ragenau.
If all the operations were calculated on the same principles as those adopted by the British, no operation, he said, would be possible at all. He could not understand why so many trucks were required during the operation. If we did not succeed within fifteen days we should not continue our offensive.